

2002-2003 No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Program Cover Sheet

Name of Principal Mrs. Gayle Putnal (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name First Presbyterian Day School, Elementary School (As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5671 Calvin Drive (If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Macon GA 31210-8099 City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

Tel. (478) 477-6505 Fax. (478) 477-2804

Website/URL www.fpdmacon.org Email gputnal@fpdmacon.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date 2/20/2003

Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

Name of Superintendent Mr. Gregg Thompson (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name N/A Tel. (478) 477-6505

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date 3/17/2003

Name of School Board President/Chairperson (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date 3/17/2003

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- Urban or large central city
- Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
- Suburban
- Small city or town in a rural area
- Rural

4. 1 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

 21 If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
K	26	36	62	7			
1	32	28	60	8			
2	28	18	46	9			
3	32	24	56	10			
4	30	34	64	11			
5	34	30	64	12			
6				Other			
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							352

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:

 92 % White
 2 % Black or African American
 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 4 % Asian/Pacific Islander
 % American Indian/Alaskan Native

100% Total

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 3.4 %

(This rate includes the total number of students who transferred to or from different schools between October 1 and the end of the school year, divided by the total number of students in the school as of October 1, multiplied by 100.)

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	8
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	352
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	0.034
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3.4%

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0 %
 0 Total Number Limited English Proficient

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %
 0 Total Number Students Who Qualify

If this method is not a reasonably accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 0 %
 0 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <u> </u> Autism | <u> </u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u> </u> Deafness | <u> </u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u> </u> Deaf-Blindness | <u> </u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u> </u> Hearing Impairment | <u> </u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u> </u> Mental Retardation | <u> </u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u> </u> Multiple Disabilities | <u> </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>
Classroom teachers	<u> 18 </u>	<u> </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u> 4 </u>	<u> 4 </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u> 3 </u>	<u> 3 </u>
Support staff	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>
Total number	<u> 28 </u>	<u> 7 </u>

12. Student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 20

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students.

	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	17%	6%	13%	15%	15%

PART III - SUMMARY

First Presbyterian Day School's Elementary School in Macon, GA, provides a Christ-centered and child-focused education that directs children toward service to their community and world and preparation for college. Our mission is to "educate and equip children to change the world for God's glory." We see education as more than instilling knowledge and skill, but as focused on implications and responsibilities. Whether our children are learning mathematics or to read, whether they are learning about the problems of homeless children around the world, or following an election or current international event, or writing letters to military veterans, they are applying the curriculum immediately and developing other-centered attitudes.

We believe children are created in the image of God. Thus, each child has immeasurable worth and potential. We seek to discern each child's individual gifts and God-given talents and develop and celebrate them. Any visitors to the Day School will enjoy extensive displays of student work. They would hear students taking such responsibilities as morning announcements. Older students might be reading to and even be read to by younger students. We honor our students for excellence in academics, character, aesthetics, and athletics. Our instruction is designed to be varied as we understand that different students learn in different ways and have differing strengths and interests.

We believe that knowledge is more than the sum of its parts and thus emphasize integrated and thematic units of instruction. In fourth grade, for example, we study world geography and culture in social studies. When the students study a unit on rivers, they learn about diverse cultures that have grown up around rivers and read literature in which a river is an important theme. In mathematics, we have an on going "world tour" that uses world data in problem solving. We also believe that the best way to learn is in context. Our on-campus teaching gardens and nature trails, our relationships with people and organizations in the community, and our careful selection of field trips and other experiential education opportunities (e.g., the *Challenger Center* in Atlanta) help our students learn in authentic life-changing ways.

We believe that our students should learn more than "basic skills." In our language arts program we are developing a strong writing emphasis. Our mathematics program emphasizes conceptual understanding and higher order reasoning. Through our science curriculum, we want students to truly understand what science is and what scientists do. Our students are involved in making observations, conducting experiments, and making and testing hypotheses. Our students receive a wonderful opportunity to share what they have learned as they teach their parents during our annual Curriculum Night.

More than two-thirds of our 4th and 5th grade students participate in band, others in chorus, and many participate in major theatrical productions. Our gifted arts faculty integrates their instruction with the other areas of our curriculum allowing all of our students to both develop their own aesthetic gifts and appreciate the gifts of others. At the same time, we have extensive involvement in after school athletics programs including football, soccer, track and cross-country. Our caring physical education and coaching staff as well as volunteer high school students provide an enjoyable and nurturing atmosphere for our children.

At the First Presbyterian Day School Elementary School, we realize that we exist to support families. So it is a great joy to see the extensive involvement of families in our school. Many parents praise the school for the family atmosphere and our families spend a lot of time at the school. The school truly is a good place to be and the fact that our enrollment has grown over 30% in the past five years attests to this warm sense of community.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

NARRATIVE OF ACHIEVEMENT DATA

Our standardized achievement test scores present a picture of high performance and significant improvement. Prior to five years ago our scores generally ranged from the 60th to the 85th percentile on the various subtests and in various grades. As we have intensively studied our students' performance and our curriculum, designed and implemented new curriculum and instructional practices, thought deeply about our mission and vision as a school, and involved teachers in significant faculty development, we have seen profound effects on our student performance. Over the past three years, our students have consistently performed to percentiles in the 80's or higher. Contrary to what one would expect statistically, these increases have occurred even with significant increases in enrollment. The most profound improvements have occurred in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade. Our school is an illustration of the impact systemic school improvement can have on student performance.

USE OF ASSESSMENT DATA

Our School Improvement Process is focused on student performance. In the classroom, we have worked extensively to use varied assessment practices in order to provide a more complete picture of student understanding. We have supplemented "event" and product testing to incorporate such practices as observation and process assessment. We have also moved from a single summary assessment (a grade) to mastery of objectives in our lower grades. Our external assessment program includes the Gesell developmental screenings for early childhood placement, Stanford norm-referenced achievement testing for individual diagnosis and curriculum evaluation, Otis-Lennon mental ability tests and the Torrance Test of Creativity for placement in special programs, and other specialized measures. We understand that the more information we have about a child's understanding, the better we are able to support that child's learning. We also understand that any one measure provides an incomplete picture and that the picture will always be incomplete without personal knowledge of the child. Thus, we trust in the caring and competent professional judgment of the teacher in partnership with parents.

COMMUNICATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

As a school we exist to support parents in the development of their children. Thus, it is important for us to help parents understand their children. An important aspect of this mission involves communicating to parents what we know about their children. Sample student work with evaluative comments is sent home weekly. Our teachers are committed to communicating with parents quickly when there is a problem and also communicating positive information. At the midpoint of each quarter, parents receive brief summary evaluations and at the quarter end, a more detailed summary evaluation. The quarter evaluations are broken down into sets objectives and indicate the degree to which the student has mastered that set of objectives. Parents also receive detailed reports of standardized achievement test performance and assistance in interpreting the results. We also understand that students learn best when they receive feedback. Thus, our teachers regularly provide individual and group feedback to students both in written and oral form. We use conferencing between teachers and students and, at times, provide opportunities for peer feedback.

SHARING SUCCESS

Since, through our mission, we expect students to have an impact on their community and world, we feel that we, as a faculty and administration, must model this outreach. Thus, we share our success with other schools in a number of ways. We encourage and support our teachers in making presentations at professional conferences and submitting articles for publication. For example, four of our teachers made professional presentations this past fall. During the fall of 2003, we will be hosting the annual conference of the Georgia Independent School Association. Our teachers serve the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as peer review team members for other schools and we welcome visitors from other schools. We also understand that the more we are involved with other schools and organizations the more we will learn and improve as well.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

CURRICULUM

The elementary curriculum at First Presbyterian Day School is designed to prepare students for a college-preparatory Upper School curriculum, help students develop fully their interests and gifts—intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and spiritual—and challenge them to understand and impact the world around them. Our curriculum has been designed through study of state and national standards as well as based upon our unique mission as a school.

In the language arts, God has given us a means of learning about Him and His creation, a way to communicate with others, and a tool to care for creation and to change our world. We desire that students become proficient with the understanding and use of written and oral language. To accomplish this goal we use a balanced literature-based approach. Four emphases are word study, guided reading, writing, and self-selected reading. In early elementary, we use a strong phonics base integrated with comprehension, writing, and learning skills. After second grade, we use a shift to a more literature and writing-based approach that develops reading comprehension and speaking and writing skills (including grammar and vocabulary development) through the study of real literature.

Students learn to proficiently use mathematics as a way of thinking about and understanding creation. We expect students to develop the proficiency to effectively study the sciences and mathematics and ultimately participate in impacting our world. The content of elementary mathematics consists of pattern, measurement and spatial sense, number sense, operations and computation, geometry and probability. We emphasize concepts and procedures as well as communicating mathematical ideas and the application of mathematical concepts. Our core mathematics program is *Everyday Mathematics*. This program recognizes children as unique and thus not all children learn in the same way.

Through the study of science, students learn more about God and His creation. Thus, they are better able to understand and fulfill their responsibility to care for and see to the appropriate use of creation. Foremost, we desire our students to develop observation skills and the ability to formulate and test hypotheses. This involves learning content knowledge as well as learning from scientific investigation. We take a strongly hands-on approach that makes use of our science laboratory facilities and technology. Students also spend time studying the aquatic, wetland, and forest ecosystems on our campus.

The social studies include history, geography, and social, political, and economic systems. The general progression for early education moves from the child's immediate experience—family and local communities—to broader experience—state, country, and world. Through the social studies, we seek to instill an understanding of our place and responsibilities in the world and society and an understanding of God's work in our world, both historically and in our present experience. Our lower school Bible curriculum is designed around six strands—basic beliefs, Bible study and scripture memory, Christian character, Christian heritage, worship, and missions (including evangelism and service).

All of our students learn keyboard skills and computer applications. The primary emphasis in the elementary school is on projects that give students opportunities to develop research skills and to integrate and present the knowledge and understanding they are gain in the classroom. The creative arts reflect God's creativity in us as His image bearers. We want all students to express themselves through visual and performing arts and to appreciate and evaluate the art of others. All of our elementary students are involved in art, music, and drama. Students with particular interests and abilities may participate in concert band, chorus, and major theatrical productions. Our arts faculty also works closely with the rest of our faculty to design instruction that complements and enhances instruction in other curricular areas.

Being "fearfully and wonderfully made" and the body being a "temple of the Holy Spirit" carries responsibilities. God expects us to develop physically and make decisions that promote a high quality of life in service to Him. Our students are involved in regular physical education instruction that promotes motor development, develops skills and attitudes for team and individual games, and instills knowledge in order to encourage healthy and God-honoring decisions related to the body.

READING CURRICULUM

The National Reading Panel reported the importance of phonemic awareness, explicit phonics instruction, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to learning to read. We also know that people will be better readers if they are read to, are guided as they read, and receive feedback. In our reading curriculum we establish reading rich environments. Our classrooms have a large variety of books for self-selected reading and our teachers and media specialist establish a tone that reading is normal, important and enjoyable. The structure of the curriculum is the four blocks of word study, guided reading, self-selected reading, and writing. In the early grades, the focus is on word study with a strong core of explicit phonics instruction. By mid second grade almost all of our students are strong readers and instruction shifts more toward comprehension through an integrated literature-based approach. Students have a variety of incentives for reading including the Accelerated Reading program. We annually have an author visit. Our Learning Assistance Program provides individualized assistance for students who do not make appropriate progress.

OTHER CURRICULUM AREA—MATHEMATICS

We are particularly proud of our mathematics program. Five years ago, we discovered that while our students had strong basic skills performance, they were not as strong as we would like in problem solving skills, dealing with non-routine problems, and exhibiting conceptual understanding. We also felt that the scope of our curriculum was too narrow to feed into a strong college-preparatory program. Over the next few years our teachers participated in extensive staff development and we adopted *Everyday Mathematics*. Since then our basics skills scores (Stanford 9) have increased substantially at the early grade levels and as our students have left the elementary school for the middle school they have exhibited much stronger performance in Algebra. In the past, 20% of our students subsequently completed Algebra by the end of 8th grade, now 80% of our students do so. The curriculum is organized in a spiral structure that introduces topics and then returns instructionally to the topics several times over two years. The instruction focuses on conceptual development and not solely on procedures. We use a variety of instructional and assessment practices and we have a significant emphasis on application. Parents have praised the program because of the mathematical thinking they see in their students.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

We believe that God has created each person to be unique, with unique gifts, abilities and interests. Thus, different students learn differently. With this realization, we believe we need to vary instructional practices to impact diverse learners. At times our instruction is teacher-directed with explicit instruction given to a group of learners. Since we are all active and social, learning needs to be active as well. Throughout our school we use small and cooperative group instruction. Our faculty understands that cooperative group instruction involves each member of the group, generally with each member involved in different tasks and then each providing input into a group task. We use partners to provide peer feedback on reading and writing. Students regularly are involved in extended projects that involve independent research and oral and dramatic presentations to their peers. We believe that experiential learning is very important. We make use of our teaching gardens, nature trails, and outdoor classrooms on campus and we use off campus trips to place our students' learning within context. We particularly value intensive experiences like the Jason Project, the Challenger Center, or participating in living history at the Georgia Agrirama. All of our teachers have completed extensive training in the use of instructional technology and use technology for instruction, student-developed products and presentations, and research. We also value team-teaching and cross-disciplinary collaboration. Our arts, classroom, and media faculty work closely together and we also at times collaborate with the faculty and students of the Upper School our students feed into.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Five years ago, our professional development budget increased from nothing to \$20,000. Since then professional development has become an important part of our school culture. We offer courses that are attended by teachers from other schools in Middle Georgia. Over 60% of our faculty takes part in faculty development opportunities over the summer, and all are involved during the school year. To a great extent, we attribute strides we have made in student achievement to this emphasis on faculty development. For example, our faculty now has a very strong understanding of mathematics and mathematics education. In the past, many were constrained to simply follow the published curriculum, now they have the understanding to flexibly deal with diverse learners and to adjust instruction to deal with the interests and needs of their particular class of students. Staff development in the language arts has helped teachers better understand the components of learning to read and write and allowed the teachers the flexibility to design integrated units without sacrificing objectives in particular curriculum areas. Faculty development has allowed our faculty to develop a strong professional community of practice that is able to collaborate in curriculum development and able to communicate to our school community in a way that inspires confidence.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

Private school association(s): Christian Schools International,
Georgia Independent School Association

Does the school have nonprofit, tax exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes X
No

Part II - Demographics

1. What are the 2001-2002 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

\$ 3990 \$ 6775 \$ 6775 \$ 6775 \$ 6775 \$ 6775
K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

2. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 6850
(School budget divided by enrollment)

3. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 330

4. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to 5 %
scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?

5. What percentage of the student body receives 19 %
scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?

ASSESSMENT DATA

Grade 1

Test Stanford 9

Edition/publication year 9th 1996 Publisher Harcourt

No groups were excluded.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs Scaled scores Percentiles

	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES						
Total Score	84	86	88	92	78	73
Number of students tested	46	55	60	52	42	43
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES						
1. Total Mathematics	86	87	84	86	67	72
2. Total Reading	86	90	93	96	81	75
3. Language	85	89	90	93	84	68

Grade 2

Test Stanford 9

Edition/publication year 9th 1996 Publisher Harcourt

No groups were excluded.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs Scaled scores Percentiles

	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES						
Total Score	80	83	88	87	74	79
Number of students tested	53	60	51	41	41	43
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES						
1. Total Mathematics	84	85	86	84	72	77
2. Total Reading	81	85	89	83	72	72
3. Language	85	86	91	76	72	70

Grade 3
9

Test Stanford

Edition/publication year 9th 1996 Publisher Harcourt

No groups were excluded.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs Scaled scores Percentiles

	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES						
Total Score	83	81	86	89	81	76
Number of students tested	63	58	44	35	46	40
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES						
1. Total Mathematics	89	80	87	91	83	74
2. Total Reading	78	81	87	84	76	75
3. Language	82	79	87	84	75	72

Grade 4

Test Stanford 9

Edition/publication year 9th 1996 Publisher Harcourt

No groups were excluded.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs Scaled scores Percentiles

	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES						
Total Score	82	79	79	88	84	81
Number of students tested	61	45	43	45	43	48
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES						
1. Total Mathematics	83	84	82	85	80	80
2. Total Reading	85	80	78	87	85	79
3. Language	82	79	82	87	79	74

Grade 5
9

Test Stanford

Edition/publication year 9th 1996 Publisher Harcourt

No groups were excluded.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs Scaled scores Percentiles

	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES						
Total Score	80	81	76	85	86	86
Number of students tested	45	45	46	41	43	43
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES						
1. Total Mathematics	84	84	80	86	87	89
2. Total Reading	78	81	76	80	80	82
3. Language	86	82	81	78	83	75